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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/16/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [IZ](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: FOLLOWING UP ON PM MALIKI'S VISIT TO TURKEY

REF: NEA/I CLASSIFIED O/I OF SEPT. 14

Classified By: Political Counselor Matt Tueller for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

(C) We met Sept. 16 with Prime Minister Maliki's Political Advisor, Sadiq Rikabi, and advised him of Turkey's interest in following up on Maliki's promise to send a team from the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) to Ankara to conclude a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on security. Rikabi promised to raise the issue with Maliki, but cautioned that Maliki's relations with KRG leader Masud Barzani were "not easy" and that the PM could not simply give Barzani orders, particularly on an issue as sensitive as this. However, Rikabi was sympathetic to the Turkish position, and faulted Iraq's Kurdish leadership for providing support to the PKK. He emphasized that Turkey is the only neighboring state not playing a negative role in Iraq. "The Turks are the only ones who are not playing the sectarian card, who are not supporting militants, and who are not using their media to attack the Iraqi government," said Rikabi, who added that Ankara was the one capital with which he foresaw "normal" relations in the near term.

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